This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-14.   (Previously canceled.)

15.   (Previously amended) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the hub is largely housed out of doors within environmentally controlled housings.

16.   (Previously amended) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the hub is powered by power sources emanating from a plurality of the buildings.

17.   (Previously amended) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein one or more of the communicating stations comprises a residence.

18.   (Previously amended) The apparatus of claim 20, further comprising a protective pedestal housing at least a portion of the nodes.

19.   (Previously cancelled.)

20.   (Currently amended) An apparatus for linking communication stations within a geographical region in computer communication, comprising:

a high speed backbone;

a plurality of branching nodes connected to the high speed backbone for relaying digital communications at baseband;

a plurality of communicating stations communicating over the backbone through the branching nodes, the branching nodes each housed in different buildings; and

a home connection box having connectors for connecting a communicating station with the a hub associated with its branching node, the connectors including a network communications connector and a power connector for supplying power from the communicating station to the hub;

wherein the branching nodes each comprise:

a hub directly connected with others of the branching nodes and directly interconnecting the plurality of communicating stations in digital communication; and

a power concentrator, the power concentrator receiving power from a plurality of communicating stations in communication with the branching node and powering the branching node with the received power, the received power being redundant, in that at least one of the communicating stations can go off-line without stopping power to the branching node.

21.   (Previously amended) An apparatus for linking communicating stations within a geographical region in computer communication, comprising:

a high speed backbone;

a plurality of communicating stations communicating over the backbone through branching nodes for relaying digital communications at baseband, the branching nodes each housed in different buildings, at least one of the communicating stations comprising a residence;

a hub communicating with the high speed backbone and directly connected with the plurality of branching nodes and directly interconnecting the plurality of communicating stations in digital communication at baseband, the hub largely housed out of doors within environmentally controlled housings and powered by power from a plurality of power sources each located within a different one of the plurality of the buildings;

a protective pedestal housing the hub, the protective pedestal located out of doors;

a power concentrator located within one or more of the branching nodes, the power concentrator receiving power from a plurality of the communicating stations in communication with the branching node and powering the branching node with the received power, the received power being redundant, in that one or more of the communicating stations can go off-line without stopping power to the branching node; and

a home connection box having connectors adapted to connect a communicating station with the hub, the connectors including a network communications connector and a power connector for supplying power from the communicating station to the hub.

22. (Previously added) The apparatus of claim 20, further comprising means for transmitting data from a security and alarm system from a plurality of the individual communicating stations to a central security office over the plurality of branching nodes.